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People's War Versus
War of Destruction in North Viet Nam

Quang Binh People's Militia Down 103 U.S. Planes and Copters

ON October 21 last, the rural militiamen and women of Quang Binh province downed a RP-4C *Phantom* with 36 machinegun shots, their 100th plane since their first kill on April 4, 1965. The following day, within a few hours they also brought down a pilotless chopper and two F-4 *Phantoms* (the latter by a unit of young country-girls).

Quang Binh is one of the provinces hardest hit by American aircraft and ships, but also the one which has inflicted the bitterest and heaviest losses upon the U.S. aggressors. Up to October 23, of a total of 3,229 U.S. planes downed over North Viet Nam, 366 went to the credit of that heroic province. The achievement of the peasant and worker militia is all the more significant as, apart from its grim determination and the greatest revolutionary heroism, it has but light infantry weapons (rifles, tommy-guns and machineguns).

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South Viet Nam

★ **2,500 Enemy Casualties, 16 Tanks Destroyed, 43 Ships Sunk or Set Afire, 11 Aircraft Downed, in Eastern Nam Bo, Ben Tre and Thuong Duc.**

★ A DOZEN TARGETS HIT BY THE P.L.A.F. FROM OCTOBER 17 TO 22.

★ *Heavy Adverse Losses by Guerilla.*

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North Viet Nam

Up to October 23, 1968

3,229 U.S. aircraft were downed

SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE'S IMPERATIVE AND LEGITIMATE DEMANDS

(Excerpts from a *Giai Phong* Press Agency commentary)

MORE insistently than ever before, world public opinion is demanding that the U.S. imperialists put an end to their war of aggression against Viet Nam and, as an immediate step, cease completely, permanently and unconditionally the bombing and all other acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam; recognize and enter into talks with the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation for a settlement of the South Viet Nam issue.

Even in the United States, many in the political circles and the broad masses of the people are urging Johnson to come round.

All this proves that the sensible stand of the Vietnamese people, as expounded in the 4 points of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the Political Program of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation, is winning greater sympathy and stronger support from progressive people in the whole world, and in the United States.

THE South Vietnamese people, standing in the forefront of the struggle against U.S. imperialism, hold that there can be no justification for the continued intensification of the U.S. bombing and shelling of an important part of the territory of the D.R.V.N.—an independent and sovereign state. The U.S. has unprovokedly bombed North Viet Nam, grossly violating the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam and flouting all norms of international law. It must therefore put an end to the bombing, without expecting any "reciprocity."

With regard to South Viet Nam, despite their obvious failure, the U.S. imperialists have not given up their aggressive design. They continue to mount repeated "sweeps," air raids and artillery bombardments, dumping even thousands of tons of bombs from B-52 strategic bombers on heavily

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Eight Months After Têt

Time for the American Leaders To Take Their Bearings!

IN late 1965, the U.S. commander-in-chief in South Viet Nam had at his disposal, besides puppet and satellite troops, about 180,000 American soldiers. With these forces, he managed to launch a "dry-season counter-offensive," clamouring that he would "break the back of the Vietcong."

In the dry season of 1966, with twice as many G.I.'s under his command, he again started large-scale military operations, although this time he was much more cautious in his words. His aim was no longer to break anybody's back, but only to loosen the noose around his own neck.

A year later, in spite of a still bigger build-up, October 1967 arrived without any sign of any U.S. "counter-offensive." On the contrary the initiative had wholly passed into the hands of the N.F.L. Starting with the attack on Loc Ninh (Oct. 29) the N.F.L. forces were soon jabbing and swinging in all theatres of operations, with the American command driven into the ropes and only trying to ward off the blows.

Then, on the night of January 29–30, 1968 the roof fell in. Within two days, the whole of South Viet Nam went ablaze. Almost all urban centres, including Saigon, all provincial capitals, all key centres of command, administration and supply, the main airfields and ammunition dumps, communication lines and electronic installations, etc. came under heavy attack. This was the start of a long, sustained, devastating series of actions, which is still continuing.

Now, eight months after *Tết*, isn't it about time for the American leaders to look back and take stock of the disaster? Here are a few hints to help them draw up a balance-sheet and make up their minds.

MILITARY AFTERMATHS

JUDGING by the reassuring statements of the American leaders to their people about the military situation since *Tết*, it is quite plain that their well-known capacity for deception and self-delusion has not diminished in the least. It is also quite plain that the tremendous ability of the American military in South Viet Nam to cook up fake reports to their political leaders has grown even greater since the Romney revelations on "brainwashing." Here are the hard facts concerning U.S. losses in men and matériel over the past eight months.

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Saigon girls drilling in manning anti-tank weapons.

VNA STATEMENT ON U.S. RELEASE OF 14 D.R.V.N. CITIZENS

ON the release by the U.S. of 14 citizens of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, *Viet Nam News Agency* is authorized to declare the following:

Under the impact of the Vietnamese people's struggle and pressure of the world public opinion, the U.S had, on October 21, 1968, to set free in the coastal area east of Vinh city, 14 citizens of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam illegally arrested by U.S. authorities.

The Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam views this as follows:

The U.S. has illegally arrested civilians and military personnel or Viet Nam cargo ships and fishing boats operating within the territorial waters of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, which is corsair act flagrantly violates the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam and international law. The Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam demands that the U.S. put an end to all such corsair acts, respect the territorial sovereignty and security of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, and set free — immediately, without any condition or any agreement between the two sides — all citizens of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam still unlawfully detained by the U.S.

South Vietnamese People's...

(Continued from page 1)

populated areas, while stepping up chemical sprayings against crops and looting raids on the people's property. They have also ordered the Thieu - Ky - Huong puppet administration to herd people into concentration areas, push up pressganging, and suppress all aspirations for independence, democracy, freedom, peace, neutrality and a better life of the people of various strata in areas still under their control.

In such a situation, in response to the sacred appeal of President Ho Chi Minh, and acting on the order of the Central Committee of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation, the South Vietnamese people are impelling forward their holy war of resistance against U.S. aggression for national salvation, attaching relentlessly and rising unprecedentedly everywhere, winning very brilliant victories. Their aim is to defeat the U.S. war of aggression, achieve independence, democracy, peace, neutrality and prosperity, and the ultimate peaceful reunification of the country.

The only way for the U.S. to avoid yet heavier defeats in South Viet Nam and achieve an "honorable peace," as it has often claimed, is to end its aggressive war.

The South Vietnamese people firmly insisted that the U.S. put an end to its war of aggression, withdraw all U.S. troops and troops of its satellites from South Viet Nam, and let the South Vietnamese people settle their internal affairs, without foreign interference, in conformity with the Political Program of the N.F.L.

THE South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation embodies the great unity bloc of the 14 million South Vietnamese people in their sacred struggle against U.S. aggression, for national salvation. It organizes, mobilizes and stimulates the South Vietnamese people in all their successful fighting. Under its glorious banner, four-fifths of the territory of South Viet Nam have been liberated, and over 10 million people are enthusiastically setting up revolutionary power everywhere, and building a new life, defying all hardships and sacrifices, and of one mind in their determination "to give everything for their victory over the U.S. aggressors."

It is the genuine representative of the South Vietnamese people, both de facto and de jure. It is not only loved and obeyed by the South Vietnamese people, but also recognized and supported by many governments and progressive people in the world. Its glorious banner has been displayed in dozens of capitals in the world, in thousands of demonstrations in the United States and other parts of the world in protest against U.S. aggression and in support of Viet Nam. Meanwhile, the Thieu - Ky - Huong puppet administration is but a clique of traitors and a U.S. instrument of aggression and enslavement. It does not represent anybody. It is cursed and condemned by the people of Viet Nam and of the world.

The U.S. must recognize the National Front for Liberation and enter into talks with it on matters related to South Viet Nam.

THESE are the imperative and legitimate demands of the people of all Viet Nam, and of progressive people in the whole world. The exposure of U.S. aggressiveness and its setbacks will only grow in proportion to its obduracy and stepping up of its war.

More difficulties and hardships are awaiting the South Vietnamese people as their fight against U.S. aggression and for national salvation is nearing victory. However, with the one-mindedness and rocklike resolve to win of the whole nation, the very great sympathy, support and assistance of the kindred North and progressive people in the whole world, they will surely defeat the U.S. aggressors and win complete victory.

PARIS TALKS' 27th SESSION

THE 27th session of the official conversations between the representative of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and that of the U.S. Government took place in Paris on October 23.

Minister of State Xuan Thuy took the floor first. He exposed the U.S. tricks to [illegible] administration and cover up U.S. neo-colonialism in South Viet Nam. He denounced the U.S. Government's "peace" ploy which was always coupled with an escalation of its war of aggression in both parts of Viet Nam.

Refuting the contention that the U.S. had to keep its "commitments to the Republic of Viet Nam," he pointed out that as the Saigon puppet regime had been created by the U.S. as an instrument for the implementation of U.S. policy of aggression in South Viet Nam, any "commitment" taken by the U.S. Government to these puppets was null and void.

Exploding the American boasts about the "elections" held in Saigon at the end of 1966 and 1967, he recalled the opinions of many papers and politicians in South Viet Nam, in the United States, and in the world which had laid bare the deceitful character of these "elections" and the spirited demonstrations staged by youths, students, Buddhist believers and other people right in areas still under the U.S.-puppet control to boycott and dismiss them as a farce. The crimes perpetrated by the various puppet administrations from Ngo Dinh Diem to the Thieu-Ky clique were also sternly denounced by the D.R.V.N. envoy.

The Vietnamese chief negotiator declared:

"It is unquestionable that the U.S. is sabotaging peace in Viet Nam. American proposals on peaceful construction and economic development in Southeast Asia are just a new version of the 'carrot and stick' policy.

"If the U.S. does not renounce its aggression, its neo-colonialist aims in South Viet Nam, if it does not perpetuate the division of Viet Nam, if it does not recognise the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and refuses to discuss with the Front questions of interest to both parties in South Viet Nam, there cannot be real peace."

He went on to say:

"The Vietnamese people, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and world opinion have been, for the last five months, as they have for a few years, insisting that the U.S. first of all unconditionally stop its bombings and all other acts of war on the whole territory of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam so that other questions of interest to both parties can be discussed.

"At this moment, this legitimate demand has become more imperative than ever throughout the world. Let me once again emphasize that the U.S. must immediately comply with this requirement to open the way to a peaceful solution of the Viet Nam problem. If the U.S. persists in trying to delay or balk such a step, it has to bear full responsibility for all the the consequences of its obstinacy."

Speaking next, U.S. representative A. Harriman repeated the same shop-worn slanders against the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and his preposterous pleas for the Thieu-Ky clique — henchmen of the U.S. As usual, he eluded the demand of the Vietnamese people for an immediate, unconditional cessation of the bombing raids and all other acts of war of the U.S. on the whole territory of the D.R.V.N.

His absurd arguments were all disposed of by his Vietnamese interlocutor.

Hanoi Press Opinion

Viet Nam Communists and People Protest Decision To Execute Indonesian Communists

ACCORDING to foreign reports, the Indonesian Government has recently decided to execute soon a number of leaders of the Indonesian Communist Party, among them Political Bureau members Njono and Sudisman.

Such a fascist step of the Indonesian authorities is part of the campaign of terror unleashed by the Indonesian reactionaries against the communists and other patriotic, democratic and progressive people in their country.

For three years now, slanderously labelling them as "coup plotters," "traitors" and "agents of foreign countries," Indonesian reaction has savagely murdered tens of thousands of outstanding sons and daughters of the Indonesian people. It has spearheaded its terror against the Indonesian communists and the sympathizers of the Communist Party and at the same time used perfidious propaganda methods to whip up an anti-communist hysteria and erase the great influence of the Communist Party among the Indonesian people.

But they decidedly can never distort the truth. The history of Indonesia during half a century past has proved that the Indonesian Communist Party is the main patriotic force which has largely contributed to the struggle to liberate the country and consolidate national independence. It has enjoyed the love and support of all the Indonesian working people. The reactionaries' plan to do away with the Indonesian Communist Party betrays their sinister design to weaken the patriotic and progressive movement in Indonesia and steer the country into the orbit of imperialism, first of all U.S. imperialism.

That the Indonesian authorities continue to persecute and murder communists and other patriotic and progressive people in Indonesia in defiance of vehement protests from broad sections of world public opinion further exposes their reactionary and anti-democratic nature. Their acts run counter to the genuine interests of the Indonesian people and play into the hands of the imperialists.

The Vietnamese communists and people condemn most forcefully the Indonesian authorities' decision to execute Communist Party leaders Njono and Sudisman and others. Once again, the Vietnamese people express their full support for the struggle of the Indonesian communists and people for national independence, democracy, peace and social progress. We believe that for all the difficulties ahead, this struggle will not cease to strengthen and broaden.

NHAN DAN (*The People*)
October, 20, 1968

FARMING STRIVES AFTER THREE IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES

PHAN QUANG

AFTER overcoming the difficulties created by the U.S. war of destruction, North Viet Nam's agriculture has been making steady strides. Its main objectives is to solve the food problem, and to develop production in a comprehensive manner: its task is to supply the population with an ever greater quantity of foodstuffs and to gradually provide a constant flow of raw materials to industry and agricultural produce for exports. The development of industry, transport and communications and public utility branches calls for an additional supply of rural manpower and so does national defence. To meet these needs agriculture should increase the volume of its production and curtail the number of its farm hands. This rise in agricultural production and in labour productivity is the essence and significance of the movement to attain the three major immediate objectives — **one hectare of land per farmer, 5 tons of paddy per year (two crops) per hectare and two pigs per hectare; this drive is now in full swing in North Viet Nam's countryside.**

The movement is the logical outcome of the endeavour going on for the last three or four years, aimed at raising the rice yield of intensive cultivation to 5 tons of paddy per hectare per year (as against 1.3 tons under the colonial and feudal regime). The effort has obtained notable results. While before the U.S. war of destruction only a few areas and agricultural co-operatives had reached this target, in 1967 there were one province, one Hanoi suburban area, over 30 districts and over 2,500 co-operatives which hit the same mark on the whole of their rice acreage. A whole region in the Bac Bo delta harvested 5 tons of paddy per hectare on 120,000 hectares of land. To expand the 5-ton acreage, to achieve a high and uniform yield over the entire rice-growing areas, is the immediate goal of agricultural co-operatives. Our agronomists have estimated that to bring in regularly five tons per hectare a year, apart from applying such intensive farming methods as adequate watering and selected seeds, it is necessary to feed at least 8 tons of litter manure to a hectare. If two pigs are reared per hectare their dung added to such local manure, as green composts, and phosphate, is enough to give nutrition to the rice plants, especially in terms of nitrogen. Thus, "two pigs for one hectare of acreage under crop" is indispensable to obtain "five tons of paddy" per year; more important still, this is a step to maintain the equilibrium between two main agricultural branches: cultivation and animal breeding. On the other hand, the reaping of 5 tons per hectare and breeding of two pigs will make possible a big advance toward the solving of the food problem and pave the way for a comprehensive development of agriculture.

As everyone is aware, in order to enable agriculture to develop all-sidedly, to grow more industrial crops and fruit-trees for industry and exports, it is necessary not only to satisfactorily resolve the food problem and reserve a sufficient acreage of land for that purpose, but to find adequate labour force.

With a rice monoculture and a low labour productivity, or to be more explicit, with a farming routine that takes up all their time and the whole of the land of the peasants to feed themselves we can never get out of the vicious circle of poverty and backwardness. That is why efforts are being made in North Viet Nam to raise the rice yield — first and foremost to 5 tons per hectare — while cutting down gradually the amount of manpower involved. At present, a hectare of rice-field still requires the labour of more than a farm hand. We are striving to carry out the slogan "One man tills one hectare," regarding it as an immediate objective, then "one man tills two hectares" and "one man tills three hectares," with an hectare producing five tons of paddy upward, and at this tempo the rice yield and labour efficiency will rise accordingly.

This is the paramount significance of the drive to attain these three objectives. Comrade Le Duan, First Secretary of the Viet Nam Workers' Party, recently said, "This requires tremendous effort aims at creating a new situation in agriculture, set a new standard in the division of labour in agriculture and in society — to develop industry and other branches. These three objectives are the substance of the watchword; "agriculture is the basis of the development of industry in the present stage."

WHAT can we do to rapidly reach these three targets? This question has been heatedly debated at meetings of co-op farmers, congresses of Party provincial branches and cells, and seminaries of agronomists and economists. The strivings after these three goals are the all-out development of three revolutions: revolution in the relations of production, technical revolution and ideological and cultural revolution.

A solid co-operative is an important factor for the attainment of these aims. That is why we must consolidate agricultural co-operatives, paying particular attention to the improvement of the organizational standard and rational use of labour force. Parallel with, and on the basis of, this consolidation, we must push up the laying of material and technical

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At Cao Bang province N.S. engineering workshop: hushing mills produced before delivery to agricultural co-op.

Editor's Note — Like many regions on the globe, North Viet Nam has recently experienced fierce typhoons and floods. The short account given below will tell our readers of the combat of an agricultural co-operative against these calamities.

HOW A CO-OP TWICE WORSTS TYPHOONS AND FLOODS

IT wasn't easy for the Dai Xuan agricultural co-operative (Hai Hung province) to grow the Summer-Autumn rice this year. Hardly had the main crop been planted when a heavy downpour submerged over 200 hectares of ricefields. But the Dai Xuan co-op farmers, who had been credited with military successes over the French colonialists in the past and the American imperialists in the current war of destruction, had enough strength and energy to cope with these natural calamities, and drain excess water away to save the crops. And the thing was done in a very short time. Thanks to the co-op farmers' solicitude the rice plants recovered their strength and shot up. The ten-land which was the hardest hit was replanted with newly-sown seedlings or with those taken from higher ricefields. And the immense plain was a luscious green again.

The Dai Xuan farmers thus carried the day in this first round against natural calamities.

However, a more violent storm broke out and overflooded hundreds of hectares of rice paddies, seedbeds and potato fields and ruined many dwelling houses. The co-op members held an emergency meeting at the yard of Goc De storehouse. Mother Tung, from Hamlet 2, spoke up the Dai Xuan cadres' mind: "Farm work must get the priority. The repair of the houses can be done later." Everybody agreed. The co-op manager said, "We must first save the seedlings; if we have the seedlings we shall have the rice."

The same night all the cadres and 300 young people went immediately to the field. The moonlight flooded the large expanse of water, and waves washed against the hamlets standing as lonely islands in face of the calamities. The column marched on the submerged ricefield dikes. They went after the seedlings, dipped their hands into the water and took them up by the roots. "But they are still green!" the co-op manager suddenly exclaimed. A group came and built an embankment around these good seedlings and continued their search for others.

The following day, it would be no exaggeration to say that all the Dai Xuan villagers were present in the field. Only weak people stayed at home to dry paddy. A new battle began: scoops, waterwheels and pumps were brought in to take out the water. After midday the co-op manager remarked: "The level of the water has gone down. When we saw it this morning it was disheartening.

"Well, our Southern compatriots do not lose heart in their fight against the aggressors, because of untold difficulties and hardships, why should we?"

A voice rose: "Let's work harder, and let's kill an ox for the occasion!"

Another replied: "No, let's finish with the transplanting first!" And they all laughed to their heart's content. At the end of the afternoon, the seedlings emerged from the water. As one hectare of seedlings emerged could supply 5 or 6 hectares of rice-fields, so with all the seedlings saved, the whole acreage of Dai Xuan ricefields will be put under rice again.

One more the Dai Xuan farmers, now masters of their own destiny, have got the better of natural disasters.

TIME FOR THE AMERICAN LEADERS TO TAKE THEIR BEARINGS !

(*Continued from page 1*)

as recapitulated in the Tenth Communique of the South Viet Nam People's Liberation Armed Forces :

— Over half a million troops killed, wounded or captured, among them nearly 180,000 American and satellite troops ;

— One American reinforced brigade put out of action; four armoured regiments, two infantry regiments, one paratroop multi-battalion combat group, and 167 battalions destroyed or badly mauled; 17 armoured squadrons and nearly 700 American, puppet and satellite companies wiped out ;

— Over 5,000 aircraft of all types shot down or destroyed on the ground.

— Over 10,000 military vehicles, among them 6,000 tanks and armoured cars destroyed ;

— Over 700 vessels, combat launches and cargo ships sunk or set afire.

What about the strategic situation ? Almost all rural areas have broken loose from U.S.-puppet control, and all American and puppet troops have had to be withdrawn to the cities and bases to ensure their defence. "Pacification" has gone totally bankrupt, and pacification boss Komer has been recalled. In Pentagon cant, "search-and-destroy" strategy has given way to "hold-and-clear" : in plain English it simply means that the aggressors are now wholly on the defensive. But even that didn't help ! The Khe Sanh "bolt" has had to be abandoned and Saigon's "defences in depth," 120 kilometres thick, have not made this last lair of the aggressors immune to constant attack. In areas still held by the U.S. the people stage repeated uprisings in coordination with P.L.A.F. raids, and guerilla warfare rages over the length and breadth of the land. No communication lines, no bases are considered safe, not even the 15-mile four-lane super-highway linking Bien Hoa to Saigon, not even Vung Tau on the coast, the "safest town" so far.

U.S. military bankruptcy has been not only strategic, but also tactical. Heliborne operations, leap-frog tactics have yielded but frustrations; hydrofoils prove of no use in the swampy lands of the delta, and neither pre-cast concrete bunkers nor tank corrals have saved U.S. troops in the field from huge holocausts.

Heavy casualties and loss of all iniitiative have had their effect on G.I. morale. Instead of coming out to meet the Liberation troops, they prefer to burrow in their bunkers and rely on blind air and artillery strikes, only to be annihilated by bazooka shells and satchel charges. They never dare to make a step forward without full air and armour cover. They refuse to take part in relief columns for fear of ambushes. Whenever the going is rough, as it most often is, they simply show a clean pair of heels. Among the puppet troops, the situation is even more alarming : cases of insubordination and rebellion multiply. In North Quang Nam for instance, within 20 days, in August-September, 18 mutinies broke out, in which soldiers killed their commanders and crossed over to the people's side. Suspicion, scorn, and outright hatred govern U.S.-puppet relations : U.S. air raids killing puppets and puppet mortars playing havoc among G.I.s—all by "mistake" of course — are common occurrences.

This haemorrhage of men and matériel in South Viet Nam could not fail to have disastrous consequences for U.S.global dispositions. American politicians and generals have voiced anguish over the insufficiency of U.S. strength in key spots of the world, the need for the restocking of U.S. inventories of "conventional weapons" drained dry by the Viet Nam war, and U.S. nuclear and space technology lagging critically behind.

Indeed, the U.S.leaders would do well to take better notice of the warnings of some of their top generals about an Asian ground war. For instance General Douglas McArthur's well-known advice : "Anybody who commits the land power of the U.S. on the continent of Asia ought to have his head examined."

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES

THE American leaders used to boast that they could offer their people both guns and butter on the same platter. Hard facts have proved, that, on this score as on countless others, they are either ignoramuses or liars.

The world has heard a lot of rhetorical flourishes and impressive metaphors about America's "inexhaustible wealth." But even this wealth has not been able to stand the strain of the senseless squandering by her leaders. According to an estimate by M.S. Eccles, former chairman of the U.S. Federal Reserve System, "during the four years of the Johnson administration ending this year, the U.S. will have squandered on the Viet Nam war the unbelievable sum of approximately 100 (one hundred) billion dollars." U.S. war expenditures in Viet nam now stand at about 30 (thirty) billion dollars *a year*, i.e. one half of the total amount of foreign "aid" for *twenty years* (1940-60), ten times the "anti-poverty" budget and four times the space program budget. It might help the American taxpayer get a more vivid idea of the size of this squandering to know that it would take Johnson 33 (thirty three) *years*, working 24 hours a day and seven days a week, to throw away just *one* billion in one-dollar bills, at the rate of one bill per second !

Small wonder that the effect of that madness was soon expressed in screaming headlines in the U.S. press : price rise, (the cost of living going up 4% to 5% a year, according to Eccles), tax surcharge, inflation, balance of payments deficit, gold outflow...in short the most serious financial crisis for decades. The posture of the dollar is shakier than ever, and this is of the most serious consequence not only for the whole "free world" economy as well.

Here are a few more significant figures :

Purchasing power of the dollar : (1939 : 100)

1947 :	62.2
1957 :	49.4
1960 :	42.2
1967 :	39.2

U.S. gold reserves (in billion dollars) :

1945 :	20
1949 :	24.6
1958 :	20.5
1960 :	17.8
1965 :	13.7
1966 :	13.2
1967 :	12.1
1968 :	10.4 (as of March)

U.S. balance of payments (in billion dollars) :

1947 :	plus 4.5
1961 :	minus 2.3
1964 :	minus 2.8
1967 :	minus 3.5

The consensus of U.S. financial circles is that there is no way out of this morass so long as the Viet Nam war is on.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL IMPACT

BUT the tragedy for the American people is not only financial. They pay for their rulers' madness not only in money, but also in blood.

In an open letter to Johnson, Women Strike for Peace, an anti-war women's organization, said : "We women gave you our sons, lovingly raised to live, to learn and to create a better world. You use them to kill and you returned 12,269 caskets and 74,818 casualties to heartbroken mothers." The figures have since soared to nearly 30,000 and 200,000 respectively, according to Pentagon estimates, which, needless to say, are very conservative.

As to the use to which the wasted money could have been put, the U.S.Committee of Returned Volunteers, in a Position Paper on Viet Nam, put it this way : "The bombs which fall on homes and schools and bridges in Viet Nam are bought with money that could be spent for education, housing, health facilities, and countless other needs of the people who live in the sub-strata of this society."

As a matter of fact, Johnson's Great Society program has been proved to be what it really is : a gigantic bluff.

And last but not least, the barbarity shown by the American military in Viet Nam has shocked the conscience of honest Americans. Says Doctor Benjamin Spock, America's leading pediatrist, "Never in history has one nation waged war within the boundaries of another with the ferocity of the United States in Viet Nam."

In such conditions it is only natural that opposition to the war has been growing by leaps and bounds. Only a few years ago, the U.S. leaders thought they could pooh-pooh their critics as "unrealistic," shrug off student protesters as "Vietniks," or even pretend that dissent was just a feature of "American democracy." But then, rallies and marches on Washington and demonstrations in Madison Square Garden have swollen to uncontrollable proportions, and draft-card burning has continued in defiance of threats of penal sanctions. Worse still, the protest has spread to all segments of the population, including senators and businessmen, generals and former ambassadors. Opposition to the war gradually gains in strength, breadth and articulateness. "Immoral, illegal, senseless, tragic, massive blunder, the most unfortunate miscalculation in our national history, a massive miscalculation and an error for which it is hard to find any parallel in our history, etc." — such are the words used by people over the whole range of the political spectrum to describe their leaders' mad venture. In the American press at large, it is no longer question of the "dissenting minority" but of "strong popular feeling against the war," something that the most obdurate war maniacs have to reckon with. Confused, frustrated, divided, ashamed of its government, such is the spectacle offered today by the U.S.A. to the world. If more evidence had been needed, it would have been amply supplied by the Democratic Convention in Chicago last August, when all pandemonium broke loose over the Viet Nam issue, while outside the convention hall, and at time inside it, police and troops clashed with wave after wave of demonstrators shouting "End the War !" and "Bring Our Boys Home Alive !" Police brutality was such that it angered the whole nation and caused indignation and disgust in the whole world.

But police terror, slander and blackmail, legal repression (the trial of Dr Spock and his friends was one of the latest examples), and even dastardly political assassinations were of no help.

Many among the inner circle themselves left in disgust and despair. Arthur Goldberg and George Ball were but the latest of a long list of high-ranking officials to leave the boat.

The anti-war movement is not the only tidal wave the Administration has had to cope with. As said an American writer, the struggle for an end to the war and that for the freedom of the American Negroes are not just two parallel movements : they intimately interlace, in the physical sense of the word. The same could be said of the struggle being waged by the poor people in the U.S. to better their lot. The spearheads of all three movements are directed against the reactionary ruling circles and are backed by all progressive and honest Americans, whose ranks are swelling fast.

FOR the Vietnamese people, the course has been charted since long. Their aims have never changed : for them "nothing is more precious than independence and freedom" and they will continue their struggle until they get them. For the American leaders, may we ask, which is the more valuable thing ? Their country's honour and legitimate interests or their own wild dreams of power and hegemony ?

South Viet Nam's Economy in a Chaos

"SOUTH Viet Nam's piaster is in trouble, double trouble," said *Reuter* in a recent analysis of the economy in areas still under U.S.-puppet control.

The agency pointed out that "the piaster at times has fallen as low as 215—only a little more than half its official rate of 118 to the dollar."

It continued : "The flight and plight of the 'P' of course is only a symptom—although a vivid symptom—of the whole post-battle chaos in South Viet Nam's economy with wild inflation in the cities, chilling depression on the farms and grave, nationwide business stagnation."

The agency noted that the money pressure and other shortages had "partly duplicated the 1966 inflation in basic necessities." It said : "Since January, the cost of city food has jumped 37 per cent and non-food items 19 per cent, for a combined cost of living rise of 32 per cent. Such a frantic rise in basic living costs has naturally played havoc with many families."

It added : "As a group, however, this inflation has hurt the farmers most. With so many food prices up, the [puppet] government has felt it must hold the rice price down — and the bulk of farm income is from rice. The farmer is thus pinned between a largely fixed income and a 19 per cent rise in non-food necessities. The result is sudden depression on the farms."

The agency continued : "At the very best, 1968 will go down as a year of no economic progress for South Viet Nam. At the very worst, the whole national economy could still collapse — a disaster that would be almost as bad as a final military defeat."

Reuter quoted one of the top economic experts in the American Aid Mission in Saigon as picturesquely describing the whole situation in these terms : "We're like a cowboy riding a bucking bronco. We're still in the saddle, but it's rough. With a little good luck we may ride it out. But just a little bad luck and we get tossed."

SAIGON PRESS OVERTLY HITS AT U.S. IMPERIALISM

IN its recent special issue, *So g* (Life), a weekly published in Sa gon, carried a series of articles with anti-American overtones. For all its limitations, the paper laid bare the neo-colonialist, aggressive nature of the U.S. imperialists and the crimes they perpetrated in South Vietnamese urban centres.

In one of the stories, the paper said, "The Americans had made many mistakes in Viet Nam. They display their force too barefacedly by their deeds and their rumors. They do not bother about camouflaging their strength. From the top military and political command downwards, everywhere, they constantly give the Vietnamese the impression that the Yankees are the bosses, a sort of conquistadors or dominators.

"Confronted with a great foreign power, Viet Nam, now as in the past, has this only recourse : to oppose it either overtly and positively or covertly and passively by means of non-cooperation.

"The popular masses and the majority of the Vietnamese people are sick of the American way of life. The free-spending Americans have upset the virtuous ethical and social life of the Vietnamese people. As their daughters are compelled to serve as bar maids for the GIs, many families harbour a deep rancour against the Americans. The sight of GIs embracing taxi-girls in Saigon flesh-spots or in front of bar-rooms strike shame and pain in the hearts of Vietnamese who find it hard to feel any kindness for them..."

In another article, the magazine wrote : "The Americans claim they are helping the Republic of Viet Nam (Saigon puppet regime—*Ed.*) defend the freedom of the world. This sounds very fine indeed, but why American aid is plagued with business tricks ?

"Economically, the Americans say they help Viet Nam develop her export trade. What have Viet Nam's exports achieved in the way of development ? As things stand, imports of US goods and rice are being encouraged to help increase US exports and make the US richer.

"The US assists Viet Nam in building industrial undertakings but, in fact, factory managers are all Americans. Big contractor's firms and trade companies are owned by Americans. This leads to economic crisis in [South] Viet Nam.

"Since the arrival of the Americans, Viet Nam's economy has gone through many crises.

"Big US capitalists are left free to manipulate the Viet Nam market. Viet Nam currency is valued on the dollar basis. When the value of the dollar drops, automatically the piastre is devalued and gold falls in price. All economic affairs are dependent on US policy.

"The presence of Americans here with too many dollars, hot music, Black and White whisky, Playboy and Men magazines, etc... has utterly perverted Vietnamese society.

"The number of prostitutes skyrockets and V.D. are rampant.

"Obscene spectacles are seen everywhere Americans are. Even in the street, an American may slip his hand inside the skirt of a young Vietnamese girl sitting by his side then laughs uproariously. Right at the P.X. he may strip off his trousers to tease some Vietnamese sale girls.

"The American presence is associated with drunkenness, ruffianism and bloody murder. All that makes news in the daily press. In short, the Americans have been making a bad use of their dollars. They have used their filthy money to seduce others' wives and daughters, and induce Vietnamese girls into selling themselves..."

Song weekly also ran an article denouncing complete US disregard for the lives of the city people : in driving carelessly and breaking all traffic regulations, the Americans have caused innumerable fatal accidents in the streets.

The paper maintained that "the US war of aggression and the deeds of the US expeditionary troops had changed the outlook of the city-folks in South Viet Nam. Even those who formerly treasured the cultural legacy full of freshness and sweetness of the US' now abhor the Americans constantly."

The weekly emphasised that each American newcomer pushed one more Vietnamese into opposition to the US and the best course of action for the US was to bring its troops home.

Viet Nam Posture

On the runway at Tan Sơn Nhut you fell,
But struggling to your feet
And resting your gun on the carcass of a chopper.
You kept firing,
And died,
As your blood gushed forth,
Like a rainbow,
With the stream of bullets.

***

In their panic Yanks surrendered to you,
Flinging themselves down at your feet
To dodge your shots
Not knowing that you had breathed your last,
While your gun kept crashing,
And the assault continued.

***

Brother—alas I don't know your name—brother dear,
Firm as a bronze wall you stood,
Your rubber sandals treading on Yankee bodies,
Simple and silent, magnificent,
Leaving behind not a photograph,
Not a line of address,
Nothing,
Nothing but that Viet Nam posture carved on the century,
The posture
Of a fighter of the Liberation Army.

LE ANH XUAN

(*Liberation Art and Literature* — May 1968)
Translated from the Vietnamese

QUANG BINH PEOPLE'S MILITIA...

(*Continued from page 1*)

and no other modern weaponry (radar, etc...).

The 103 American planes knocked down by the Quang Binh people's militia represent one-third of the planes downed by their brother units in North Viet Nam and include 13 types of which the F-4 *Phantom* and F-105 *Thunderchief* fighter-bombers — the last word of U.S. ultra-modern technique — exceed by far other planes in number. Remarkably enough 18 of them have been hit at night.

The militia of every two villages in the province has been cited for having grounded American planes and 7 villages for over 3 kills each. Two units of "veterans" (quinquagenarians and upwards) have downed supersonic jets while a 19-year-old girl, Nguyen Thi Xuan, has knocked out of the sky a *Phantom* with 24 automatic rifle shots. The girls' artillery unit in village N. has three times hit ships of the Seventh Fleet.

Quang Binh is also among the provinces which, despite heavy rains of enemy bombs dropped on them, has achieved greatest distinction in production and the maintenance of communication lines, a job done by civilians with rural militiamen and women as hardcore.

These exploits accomplished by the D.R.V.N. with Quang Binh as vivid symbol, constitute a further proof of the huge potentiality of a people who are firmly resolved to defend their Fatherland, opposing people's war to imperialist aggressive war, even waged by the Americans. They also spell out the utter failure of the war of destruction on which so much has been staked by Washington and which has been a burden and a shame to the American people.

FOUR MILLION JAPANESE PROTEST U.S. VIET NAM WAR

IN the biggest joint campaign since 1960 against the U.S. imperialists and the Japanese reactionary administration, nearly 4 million Japanese on October 21 held meetings and demonstrations throughout the country under the slogans "Stop the war in Viet Nam!", "Return Okinawa!" and "Americans go home!". Western sources reported.

The action was taken in commemoration of the traditional "International Day of Struggle Against War."

Three million trade unionists staged anti-war workshop rallies at 363 places while over 800,000 workers and students paraded in the streets, the same sources said.

In Tokyo, the number of protesters was estimated at 55,000. They organized rallies or marches through the streets. Thousands of workers, students and other people attacked the Parliament, the police and defence agency headquarters and the U.S. Embassy. *AFP* reported that one of the day's biggest demonstrations took place at Shinjuku station, with the participation of nearly 6,000 students. Many of the latter broke through the police cordon, tore down station installations and built barricade while others climbed up onto the road bridge over the tracks and stoned trains passing underneath. As a result, several trains, especially those carrying jet fuel to U.S. military bases, were delayed.

Some 12,000 riot policemen were mustered who used batons, gas, guns and hoses against the demonstrators. Hundreds of arrests were made.

Mammoth demonstrations also took place in Kyoto, Osaka and other Japanese cities where lie U.S. military bases. The demonstrators strongly protested against U.S. aggression in Viet Nam and U.S. occupation of Japan.

In an editorial on October 23, the Hanoi daily *Nhan Dan* warmly thanked the Japanese people for their support to Viet Nam. The editorial stressed: "We are solidly behind the Japanese people's valiant struggle against U.S. imperialism and Japanese monopolies for the return of Okinawa to Japan, for the abolition of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, and for independence, peace, democracy, neutrality and improvement of living standards. The people of Viet Nam and Japan, by strengthening their solidarity, will certainly win glorious victory in the struggle against U.S. imperialism, for their fundamental national rights."

News from LAOS

LAO PATRIOTS WIN BIG SUCCESSES IN RAINY SEASON

IN the last 4 monsoon months, the Lao patriotic armed forces mounted 352 attacks on the rightist army, putting out of action over 3,000 enemy troops and bringing down 30 aircraft, *Khaosan Pathet Lao* (*Pathet Lao* News Agency) reported.

The enemy losses in men included 1,581 killed, 487 wounded, 177 captured, 273 who surrendered and 600 deserters.

Besides, the patriots seized 629 guns including 36 recoilless rifles and mortars, 34 bazookas and machineguns, 50 radio transmitters, and a large amount of ammunition and other military equipment. The Lao Ngam district town, a strategic area in Savanakhet province (Lower Laos) and dozens of villages were liberated.

Coupled with military actions, the political struggle in enemy-controlled areas has very effectively foiled enemy pressganging and looting operations. In Phathi (Luang Prabang), Borikhan, Kasi, Phonhong (Vientiane) and some other areas, the enemy had to send home altogether over 100 young men in face of the strong anti-draft movement.

The successes won by Lao patriots are creating favourable conditions for them to score even greater ones in the coming dry season, *Khaosan Pathet Lao* remarked.

South Viet Nam-U.S. Solidarity Committee Sends Best Wishes To U.S. War Resisters

The South Viet Nam People's Committee for Solidarity with the American People (C.S.A.P.) has sent a letter to the American people on the occasion of its first founding anniversary (Oct. 16).

The letter, released by *Giai Phong* Press Agency, reads in full as follows:

Dear American friends,

ONE year has gone by since Oct. 16, 1967, the day when the South Viet Nam People's Committee for Solidarity with the American People was founded, at a time of a record high in the struggle of the American people for an end to the war in Viet Nam.

The South Vietnamese people have been following with warm sympathy and appreciation the vigorous advance of the anti-war movement in the United States, from the Oct. 21st, 1967 Confrontation at the Pentagon, the confrontation on the opening day of Congress of the Jeannette Rankin Brigade, the numerous demonstrations and petitions of the academic and professional community in protest against Dr. Benjamin Spock's trial to the recent exultient and bloody anti-war demonstrations at the Democratic Convention in Chicago...

The South Vietnamese people have also been following with great attention and sympathy anti-war actions developing among the G.I.s in South Viet Nam and U.S. troops stationed in the Pacific or in Europe, and right in the States, especially the recent 50,000-strong demonstration by war veterans and G.I.s in San Francisco, demanding an end to the war in Viet Nam and the return home of all the G.I.s. We regard such moves as significant indications of the awakening of the G.I.s, who refuse to kill and be killed in an unjust and criminal war.

On this occasion, the C.S.A.P. wishes to extend its affectionate regards to, and express its admiration for, those G.I.s and American youths now in jail because they have deserted, dodged draft or refused service in Viet Nam, as well as to their families. We believe you will have the moral strength necessary to uphold truth and justice in face of all the mean repressive schemes of the U.S. administration.

The last year also marked a new step in the strengthening of friendly ties and close solidarity between our two peoples, in the common struggle for peace, justice, freedom, democracy and civil rights and an end to the war in Viet Nam, from the Bratislava Conference gathering representatives from South and North Viet Nam and the United States, to the meeting between women from South and North Viet Nam and the U.S.A. in Paris, and between youths from South, North Viet Nam and the U.S.A. in Stockholm, Sofia, Budapest, etc...

Dear American friends,

The Chicago events, particularly the brutal crackdown by the U.S. police upon the anti-war demonstrators, have thrown light on the truth for public opinion in the U.S.A. and the world to see: Johnson's "democracy" and "peace" propaganda ploys are mere lies. Now, faced with the legitimate aspirations and the growing opposition by the American people and under pressure from world opinion, any candidate to the Presidency has to advocate "an end to the war." But in fact those sweet words are only appeasing and vote-catching traps.

With the experience gained in their past struggle, better than anybody else, the American people have clearly seen through the psychological moves of the U.S. ruling circles and will certainly apply more pressure on the U.S. government to stop the war, completely halt the bombing of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and bring all the G.I.s home.

In South Viet Nam, development of the military situation since the beginning of this year, particularly the series of offensives on the urban centres by the troops of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and other patriotic forces as well as the evacuation of Khe Sanh and many other strategic positions by the United States, have probably brought home to you that the war waged by the U.S. government on our people is not only a criminal, unjust, illegal and immoral, but also a losing one. The best way to protect the lives of the G.I.s is to demand that they be brought back to their families — now and alive.

Once again, we expect that you are fully aware that the South Vietnamese people only wish for friendly relations with the American people. The South Vietnamese mothers never want American mothers to weep and wail over the loss of their beloved sons in an alien land, for an unknown purpose.

The U.S. government has no right to wreak death and destruction on a people whose only desire it is to live in peace. The U.S. government has no right to force the American people to pay with their own blood and money for a war they don't want and which they oppose, a war that smears the honor and fine traditions of the American people. The U.S. government has no right to force American youths to sacrifice themselves in the selfish interests of U.S. war monopolies, in a war against a whole nation, a war abhorred by the whole mankind.

We are confident that the unshakable will of the South Vietnamese people, for Independence, Freedom and Self-Determination, will win the increasing approval of broad strata of the people in the U.S.A., and that you will step up your struggle, in response to the Appeal launched by the National Mobilisation Committee to End the War in Viet Nam during last August Confrontation in Chicago: "We will demonstrate our determination to stay in the streets of America whoever the candidate, whatever the platform, until every G.I. is home from Viet Nam."

We wish the G.I.s in South Viet Nam, American youths jailed in the U.S.A., for having resisted induction, and G.I.s imprisoned for having disobeyed orders to go to South Viet Nam an early and happy return to their families. We wish more and more G.I.s stationed in U.S. bases everywhere and right in the U.S.A., to become alive to their legitimate interests and resolutely go by their conscience, by abstaining from any involvement in the Viet Nam war of aggression.

On this occasion, the C.S.A.P. wishes to extend its friendly greetings and sincere gratitude to anti-war organizations of Americans living in France, Great-Britain and Cuba, and to various peace organisations around the world, for their generous support and assistance for American draft resisters and deserters. We hope that to cope with the new development, you would further push up your actions.

With our salutations of friendship and solidarity.

ALL-ROUND CONSTRUCTION PUSHED UP IN SOUTH VIET NAM LIBERATED ZONE

CONSTRUCTION in the liberated zone in South Viet Nam is being vigorously stepped up despite the intensified U.S. war of aggression, *Giai Phong* Press Agency reported.

PROGRESS IN EDUCATION IN CENTRAL NAM BO

THE general education service in Central Nam Bo (South Viet Nam proper) trained 692 teachers in the six months ended July 1968.

The contingent of teachers for A. B. C. and primary class keeps swelling in the area, including Ben Tre and My Tho provinces which are subject to daily bombardments by U.S.-puppet troops.

50 secondary school teachers qualified in the said period. Many villages have built 3 and even 15 classes as against none in the past. Secondary schools have been built in nearly 20 villages in Ben Tre province.

Besides, complementary education classes have been opened in all liberated villages in the region for N.F.L. (National Front for Liberation) cadres, armymen and young people.

Thousands of teachers and students have volunteered for the front or joined the guerillas or the People's Liberation Armed Forces, and many of them have been awarded the glorious titles of "Valiant Anti-U.S. Fighters" or "Valiant Destroyers of Armoured Cars."

PUBLIC HEALTH IN WESTERN NAM BO

THE health service in the Western part of Nam Bo is effectively serving the people and armymen in the field. More than 20 surgical teams and many other medical teams have gone up the line.

Great importance has been attached to the expansion of medical network to villages and hamlets. Nearly all villages in the region now have medical stations.

Medical workers have been dispatched in time to newly-liberated areas to attend to the people's health and set up medical centres to serve production and the fight.

Besides regional hospitals, two or three medical stations have been built in every province and even in every district.

Eastern medicine and local medicinal plants have been in increasing use.

More than 60 kinds of eastern and western drugs have been produced in the region and more than half of the material come from local sources.

70 middle-level pharmacists have graduated in the area while more than 500 students are being trained into assistant doctors and middle-level pharmacists. Nearly 30 classes have been run for midwives and hospital-assistants. In Soc Trang province alone, five such classes are operating.

Special efforts are being made to show the people how to fight toxic chemicals sprayed by enemy planes and to give first aid to the wounded.

NEW LIFE BLOOMING IN NINH THUAN

THE people in mountainous areas in Ninh Thuan province have been enthusiastically establishing and consolidating revolutionary power.

In Bac Ai and Anh Dung districts 99 per cent of the voters went to the polls to elect People's Liberation Councils. Revolutionary power has been set up in 29 villages, and is being established at district level.

Under the leadership of the local Committees of the National Front for Liberation and the village People's Liberation Councils, the people in the province have made many more bamboo spikes and other primitive weapons and built many more air-raid shelters, fortifications and "fighting villages" in view of eventual enemy raids.

They have also formed mutual aid teams to help one another step up farming despite air raids and noxious chemical spraying by the enemy.

Nearly all the norms for the winter planting plan, particularly for paddy and maize, are much higher than last year.

Education and public health have received particular attention in the mountain regions in the province. Each village has at least three A.B.C. and complementary education classes, and is equipped with self-service medicine chests.

FARM PRODUCTION UP IN THUA THIEN—HUE

THE Hue Committee of the N.F.L. and the Thua Thien-Hue People's Revolutionary Committee have met and worked out practical measures to help the people boost up production.

The conference called for more effective assistance to the people in the current winter crop. It has appealed to the People's Liberation Armed Forces in Hue city, and the regional army and guerillas in the Thua Thien-Hue area to endeavour to "wipe out the enemy and defend the fruits of the people's labour."

FARMING STRIVES...

(*Continued from page 3*)

bases by satisfactorily solving the irrigation problem, curbing and then overcoming drought and water logging, improving farm implements and supplying co-operatives with small engineering facilities, building roads, bridges and stables, supplying adequate food for domestic animals, cross-breeding plants and animals... The popularization of science and technology among the masses and harnessing it to production must be stepped up. The sense of being collective masters must be enhanced in co-op farmers and socialist democracy properly carried out in order to make the best use of the peasants' labour power and creativeness. The achievement of these three aims is the crux of our present plan of economic development; it is not only the concern of agriculture but also of industry, trade, transport and communications, etc... which are duty-bound to help agriculture carry through its task. Local industry regards servicing of agriculture as its main job. Conversely, industry can find in the requirements raised by agriculture a stimulus impelling its own rapid development.

Though still at its initial stage, the movement to attain the three objectives is gaining momentum. Last year, it was successful in a number of co-operatives located in different regions and with very different conditions. The provinces are now summing up the experiences gained by these "vanguard" organizations, and will draw useful lessons to push forward this general effort in order to enable most of the agricultural co-operatives to reach the three targets in the near future.

Military Operations

(*Continued from page 8*)

— put out of action on October 18 elements of *American* Division near **Quang Ngai** and puppet troops near **Hue** and north of **Qui Nhon** (14th parallel).

— stormed on October 20 the base of U.S. Division 4 near **Pleiku** (Western High Plateaux).

— overran on October 21, the enemy position defending **Tuyeng Duc**, a gun emplacement of South Korean troops near **Nha Trang** and **Tanh Linh** post, southernmost end of the Western High Plateaux.

— raided on October 22 **Phan Thiet** and **Hoi An** provincial capitals as well as the American bases at **Phu Bai**, near **Hue**, and at **Dong Ha**, south of the 17th parallel.

EVER since Hank's family and neighbours in hamlet X were forcibly moved to the H.V. "strategic hamlet," they had scarcely a moment of peace. About 500 metres from this disguised concentration camp the Americans had built a heliport. The internees were used now to repair the landing ground, now to dig trenches or build fences against eventual attacks by the People's Liberation Forces. All day long, helicopters came and went, filling the air with deafening din.

The rumbling of the helicopters and the squatting corrugated iron roofs in the "strategic hamlet" irresistibly reminded Hank of his home in the native village where he used to read, play balls or spin yarns with his friends, beneath the shady line of trees. Now he felt quite lonely in a corner of the bambo fence, trying to avoid the inquisitive eyes of the spies roaming day and night about the hamlet. His heart boiled with bitter anger. Seeing the American soldiers bustling beside the helicopters, he said to himself: "No, I won't let you carry on like this." After that, he went everyday to the helicopter ground, silently watching the planes coming in and going out.

His attention was drawn to a dark green UH1 parked near the main gate of the airfield. It usually took off at 7 a.m. and returned two hours or so later. Everytime it landed exactly at the open ground reserved for it, and everytime when the rotor blades whirred to a dead stop, Hank saw an interpreter step down, followed immediately by an American lieutenant in his shorts, then a consequential major in his carefully pressed uniform. The latter's eyes protruded behind black-rimmed spectacles. Finally there came the pilot and co-pilot looking like two medieval knights in their cumbersome bullet-proof vests.

Having studied the routine of this helicopter, Hank decided to destroy it. One day, he stole back to his native village where he got into touch with Ba, the guerilla commander, and told him of his plan.

"Give me a mine," he insisted, "and I'll blast the copter to pieces!"

"How will you manage that?" Ba ashed.

"Well, it's quite simple..." And Hank muttered into Ba's ears details of his plan.

Ba smiled happily, hugging the 13-year-old boy tightly.

Some days later, in the early morning, enemy agents again broke into every house in the "strategic hamlet" and ordered the inmates out for a weeding at the airfield. Four youngsters, among them Hank, also went with their elders.

A heavy mist hung over the airfield. The helicopters lay there like giant sleeping geese. Some had started their engines, their rotor blades whirling wildly. One after another, after some reaching movement, they lifted themselves up in the air. A few minutes later the dark green UH1 carrying the American major also soared off, leaving beneath it a patch of ground smeared with grease and oil. Hank was working not far from its landing ground, keeping a keen eye on the puppet spy who was talking to the crowd. The hoe in his hand moved diligently, scraping up tufts of weed still moist with the morning dew. Almost imperceptibly his feet moved in the direction of the parking ground of the UH1. Seeing that the spy was busy making love to a woman, Hank quickly dug a hole. Bent double, he set the timing device, put the mine in the hole and, to wipe out traces, spread a layer of oil-soaked soil on it.

The sun had risen high in the sky. The morning sun rays had dissolved the curtains of mist, baring the remaining

How a Boy Boobytraps a U.S. Chopper

helicopters lying here and there on the airfield. The gang was slowly gnawing at other grass invaded patches in the midst of his elders, Hank from time to time shot a glance at the mine-trap in anxious suspense.

At about 9 a.m. there came the rumbling of an engine. Then the helicopter, like a giant dragon-fly, made its appearance and grew in size. It sloped down lower and lower when nearing the airfield. "Is that the one?" Hank wondered as he pretended to continue weeding, his eyes rivetted upon the in-coming craft. "Yes, that's it!" he sighed in relief.

The chopper settled on the landing ground, its rotor blades raising a cloud of dust. Hank heart was throbbing as wildly as the rumbling of the copter while his eyes were glued on the side of the craft. When the rotor blades revved down to a halt Hank felt that his heart also stopped beating. An ominous silence felt on the surroundings. Those were probably the most tense moments he had ever lived! There, that's the interpreter," he almost cried out. Then came the American lieutenant, and now the major himself had already appeared at the door. "Why has it not gone off? Have I got a dud mine?" Sweat was beading on his forehead. Many unanswered questions were popping in his head. But, suddenly a greenish flash light flared up, followed by a deafening blast. A strong gust of wind swept by, knocking down many people in the neighbourhood. Hank himself was hurled off the ground as by an invisible hand.

The airfield became astir. U.S. servicemen, puppet soldiers and spies rushed about in confusion. Hank cast a look back and saw the helicopter already crumpled like a heap of scrap iron from which black smoke was billowing up. Nearby a few Americans lay unconscious in a pool of pools of pain. Another copter in the neighbourhood was also damaged in its side.

The crowd of villagers stampeded out of the airfield through the gate. Hank lingered behind a little while, gazing intently at the havoc done. When some Americans ran up to him he broke into a run, disappeared among his elders and slipped out.

ON THE LARGE SOUTHERN FRONT

Military Operations

IN the battles unfolding in the Saigon sector, Eastern Nam Bo, Ben Tre, Mekong delta, Thuong Duc and southwest of Da Nang between September 29 and October 19, 1968 (reported by *Giai Phong* Press Agency last week), the P.L.A.F. inflicted over 2,500 casualties on the enemy, destroyed at least 16 tanks and 5 heavy guns, sank or set ablaze 43 ships and armed junks and downed 11 planes and helicopters.

Furthermore, Western agencies reported that from October 19 to 22, the enemy had been hit by P.L.A.F. artillery and infantry throughout South Viet Nam from Dong Ha (near the 17th parallel) to Rach Gia in the Gulf of Thailand.

NAM BO

- **A Regrouped U.S. Position at Nha Do Partially Wiped Out: Over 200 G.I.s Put out of Action, 16 Tanks Destroyed.**
- **One U.S. Battalion and Two Companies Annihilated 70 km South-Southeast of Saigon and a Puppet Battalion Badly Mauled 26 km Northeast of Vung Tau.**
- **11 Ships Including a Cargo-Boat and a 10,000-Ton Tanker Sunk or Burnt on the Giong Trom River (Ben Tre Province) Below Saigon.**

IN Eastern Nam Bo, north, east and southeast of Saigon, the P.L.A.F. destroyed on October 12 the C.P. signal centre and mortar emplacement of a regrouped U.S. position at **Nha Do** near Lai Khe base, 45 km north of Saigon. Over 200 G.I.s were wiped out of action and 16 tanks destroyed, *Giai Phong* Press Agency reported.

In a locality near the Cambodia frontier, Tay Ninh province, 93km north, northwest of Saigon, the U.S. artillery position at **Soc Con Trang** was overrun on the night of October 18: a platoon and a group of G.I.s knocked out and 5 heavy guns destroyed.

About sixty kilometres east, northeast of Saigon, the guerillas hammered at the enemy in **Xuan Loc** provincial capital and in a locality 26 km northeast of Vung Tau. On October 12, a puppet battalion was decimated in **Dat Do** district, **Vung Tau**, a "peace haven" of the enemy, was heavily bombarded on the night of October 18, some hours before a meeting held there between Thieu and 4 army corps commanders.

Harassing the waterways below Saigon, the patriotic forces damaged on October 5 a 10,000-ton cargo, 22km southeast of Saigon; in the same area on October 4 and 9, 4 ships including an LCM was sunk or set on fire while on October 10, a 13,000-ton tanker was sent to the bottom of Nha Be port, 10km south, southeast of Saigon. Enemy losses in this sector totalled 6 ships in the week ending October 10.

In Ben Tre province, the battle fought against an American brigade supported by several puppet battalions in the area of the **Giong Trom** river has been going on unremittingly since September 29 (*Viet Nam Courier* No 186): *Giai Phong* Press Agency reported that up to October 12, adverse losses ran to over 1,800 men (mostly American) put out of action, 35 ships and other craft sunk and 9 warplanes and choppers downed.

Western agencies revealed that P.L.A.F. artillery and infantry assaulted the enemy on the **Dong Cung** river, 280km southeast of Saigon, near the southernmost tip of the country (October 17), the puppet troops helilifted near **Cai Be**, 80km southwest of Saigon (hit by 30 shells on October 20) and the H.Q. of U.S. Division 9 at **Binh Duc**, near My Tho and **Rach Gia** provincial capital in the Gulf of Thailand (October 21).

Regional troops and guerillas in the Mekong delta were also very active. From October 9 to 11, in **Tri Ton** district, 185km southsouthwest of Saigon, they put out of action 130 enemy soldiers and downed 2 choppers; on October 1 and 2 in **Thu Thanh** district, Soc Trang province, 150km southwest of Saigon, they killed or wounded 155 others, brought down one helicopter and destroyed 4 armoured cars; in **Thu Thua** and **Ben Luc** districts, 20-30km southwest of Saigon they took a toll of 250 adverse lives (September 18—October 1) and in 6 provinces in the delta they grounded 7 choppers within 40 days, from September 1 to October 9, 1968.

TRUNG BO

- **P.L.A.F. Heavy Pressure Continued Around Thuong Duc: 724 Enemy Troops (400 G.I.s) Killed or Wounded, 2 Helicopters Downed (Up to October 18)**
- **An Enemy Position Near Da Lat Overrun.**
- **Guerilla Warfare: 200 Enemy Casualties Around Hue and 900 Others in Phu Yen Province.**

FROM October 12 to 18, the P.L.A.F. continued to harass the enemy at **Thuong Duc**, 40 km southwest of Da Nang, by infantry and heavy artillery shelling, *Giai Phong* Press Agency reported.

On the night of October 11, they stormed a hill defending the camp, wiping out in a fifteen minutes' battle a company of Battalion 3, U.S. Marines Regiment 5, causing 135 enemy casualties and gaining control of the terrain. On October 14, they badly mauled another company and on October 18, killed 60 G.I.s in a bayonet and hand grenade fight. From October 12 to 18, the enemy in the same sector took 335 casualties (over 200 American) and had a chopper downed and another burnt. The result of this campaign which began on September 28 has been headlined above.

In **Da Nang** city, on October 18, the information hall of the third district was plastered by the patriots.

Further south, in **Phu Yen** province (13th parallel) the guerillas and regional troops, from September 15 to October 4, put out of action 900 enemy soldiers.

Near **Da Lat** (Western High Plateaux) after a 30-minute engagement on October 12, an enemy position fell into the hands of the patriots who seized a great quantity of arms and ammunition.

In **Hue** region, in the second half of September the enemy lost at the hands of the guerillas 200 men while on October 9, the **Dong Loam** base of U.S. First Air Mobile Division was bombarded for the third time since September 8 and blazed for hours. Already in the September 8 attack against that big camp, the enemy had had 35 choppers and L-19 scout planes and 50 vehicles destroyed.

Western reports also reported that the P.L.A.F.:

—devastatingly struck on October 17 at a puppet battalion near **Gio Linh** south of the 17th parallel (4 armoured cars destroyed) and at Pak Jung Hi troops near **Nha Trang**.

(Continued page 7)

Saigon Puppet Clique Unmask Themselves

FOLLOWING a ballyhoo about their "anti-corruption campaign" and after having used this label to discard a great many of their opponents including many protégés of Nguyen Cao Ky—the puppet "vice president" and his chief rival,—Nguyen Van Thieu and his collaborator, Tran Van Huong, finally let out an unconcealable truth.

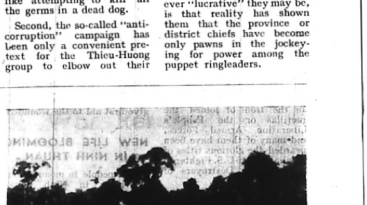
According to Western reports, Tran Van Huong himself told newsmen in Saigon on Oct. 7 that "if we root out corruption completely we will get rid of too many people. There won't be anyone left to do the work." (*UPI* Oct. 8)

Observers see in this avowal a double meaning:

First, all henchmen of the U.S. are thieves, without exception. Graft and bribery are the attributes of the Saigon administration. To dream of ridding it of corruption is like attempting to kill all the germs in a dead dog.

Second, the so-called "anti-corruption" campaign has been only a convenient pretext for the Thieu-Huong group to elbow out their opponents. In other words, they only oppose the "corrupted" of the opponent factions while fostering those of their fold. And needless to say, these are the biggest grafters of all.

Tran Van Huong also said that there were now fewer candidates for jobs as province and district chiefs, because they are no longer as "lucrative" as they used to be. "When we need 110 men for such openings, from the rank of colonel down to captain, we could get only 37 to come forward," he added. Why is that? Not because puppet colonels and captains find the posts of province or district chiefs less "lucrative", but because more and more province or district chiefs and other cruel agents of the U.S.-puppets have been duly punished by the Liberation Armed Forces and people of South Viet Nam. Another reason for their reluctance to accept such positions, however "lucrative" they may be, is that reality has shown them that the province or district chiefs have become only pawns in the jockeying for power among the puppet ringleaders.



South Viet Nam: civilian volunteers carrying supply to the battlefront.

THE OLD LADY OF TAY NGUYEN

THAT day, Loan (a Liberation fighter) got a bad wound and lost conciousness amidst the battle-cries of his comrades who were charging their opponents. When he came to, he found that he was lying on an embroidered blanket commonly used by the Tay Nguyen (Western High Plateaux people. He was trying to call back to his mind what had happened when a small and slender woman of a Tay Nguyen national minority, a basket on her back, holding a bowl of soup in her hand, helped him sit up. The hot soup smelt delicious. The bony hand of the old lady fed him the soup, with a spoon. Only after a long while, could she mutter a few words, "Come on, eat your soup, Sonny!"

Loan did not know exactly where he was now, but he was deeply touched by the woman's behaviour. When he finished his food, she laid him down, pulled the blanket over him and said, "You just stay here, young fighter, until you are well again and then you can go back to your unit." Then she stepped out in a hurry. Every time she came to tend him, she always hurried back like that. Later on, Loan came to understand that he was lying in a jungle area close to a route which the enemy often scoured. One day, as they were about to go out for a "sweep," the old lady anticipated that they would use police dogs to search the area. She got there very early in the morning and helped Loan move off to another place. In this new jungle patch, the young guerilla even found better accommodations. Naturally, she knew what was bound to happen and had taken the necessary precautions.

Today, she brought rice soup to him, accompanied by a group of villagers. The last bowl of soup was even sweetened with honey. The boy swallowed every spoon of it and, with it, the sweet taste of the unqualified loyalty to the Revolution of a Tay Nguyen elderly woman. His wound was healing up remarkably.

A stretcher was made ready to carry him back to his unit. The old lady tidied things up then said to Loan, "Now, off you go! The villagers are returning you to the Revolution. Good luck!"

Lying on the stretcher along with a roll of cotton wool and bandage, Loan tried to lift up his head to say goodbye to the old lady. He saw her standing still, with her eyes riveted on him, and with tears of brimming affection in them.

Back with his mates, he never forgot the image of the Tay Nguyen elderly lady, and the warmth of the embroidered blanket.